

# The current situation and teaching methods of English education in China

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## **Abstract:**

The purpose of this paper is to study the current situation of English education in China and its existing and future teaching methods. With the increase of foreign exchanges, China has started paying attention to English education, but it is also facing all kinds of challenges, such as test-based education and the lack of language environment and teachers' teaching ability. This essay analyses the current situation of English language learning and its existing teaching methods, and recommendations to improve them. The study highlights the need to improve the quality of English education by creating an English language environment, promoting language 'internalisation' and improving the ability to use the language, and stimulating students' interest and motivation in learning.

**Keywords:** Foreign Language Education (English Education); Early Childhood; English Learning; The Current Situation; English Teaching Methods

## **1. Introduction**

With the growth of foreign trade and the increase of foreign exchanges, foreign language education, especially English education, has become the main goal of Chinese education. Nowadays, English language education of China is highly appreciated, which is reflected decision-making support of the government, process in teaching methods, and the introduction of excellent teaching resources. However, it also brings all kinds of challenges and questions. For example, the models of English teaching are tend to be applied in the tests and the lack of language environment and the teaching ability by teachers. Much work so far has focused on policy implementation, teaching methodologies, and teacher development. According

to the researches of Chen et al. (2022)[1] and Liu et al. (2021)[2], there is some benefits on early childhood English learning, at the same time, the teaching skills of teachers and the motivation of study for students. Other studies(Jiang et al., 2019; Yao et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2020)[3][4][5] find out the use of online English education during the COVID-19, the implications for the complexity of providing English education and the role of the teacher in mixed-learning environments. Thus, this essay deeply researches the current situation of English teaching in China to improve the quality of teaching and it is a significant point of increased competition of the country. This research is to support the suggestions for the further development in English language teaching of China.

## 2. Current situation of English education in China

Since the reform and opening up, there has been a surge of English learning in China, and English education has become a common concern of society(Liu, et al, 2021)[2]. The current situation of English education in China can be summarized as follows. First of all, test-oriented teaching is the center. Since the level of English proficiency is judged by the test scores, students like to learn English opportunistically, pay little attention to basic skills, and over-rely on some test-taking skills. And the examination for the written test, the relative attention to listening and speaking also directly leads to deaf English and other phenomena, some students can get high scores, but they can not skillfully use English. Secondly, the study of English is mainly based on the content of books, and the lack of practical language environment. As a language, in addition to the mastery of basic knowledge points and theories, the most important thing is to practice multi-opening, and a good language environment is crucial. However, in most areas of China, there is a lack of good English language environment, and students will hardly communicate in English after class, while the language environment provided by classroom English teaching is very limited, and many students are ashamed to speak in front of classmates and teachers in class. It leads to insufficient practical application ability of English(Chen, et al, 2022) [1]. Although there are a large number of English teachers in China and graduates studying English education have entered the society, the professional quality still needs to be improved, especially for middle and early childhood English teachers in remote and poor areas. In China, most kindergartens and primary schools do not have high requirements on the quality of teachers, who can usually graduate from secondary schools. Some teachers' pronunciation is not standard and their level is insufficient, so they cannot shoulder the heavy responsibility of guiding students to learn English well.

In conclusion, the current situation of English education in China is that the number of educated people is large, but the number of people who can actually use English is small. From the perspective of language economics, it is a case of high investment (students invest a lot of time and money in English learning) but low output (students' actual English application ability is low, and society's demand for foreign language talents is not met), and low efficiency of English education.

3: Exploring English teaching methods

### 3.1 Optimize the learning atmosphere and create an English environment

In order to make English learning from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom, we should use wall charts and slide films to create scenes in class, read pictures and speak in English, play roles in English, engage in scramble competitions in English, think and imagine in English, and create a conversational environment to the maximum extent. Language environment is very important, in order to stimulate students' interest in learning, we must create an environment for students to learn English and use English, this environment includes hard environment and soft environment(Jiang, et al, 2019)[3]. The so-called "hard environment" is to set up English wall newspapers, English slogans, English pictorial magazines, etc., in the indoor, to open an "English corner" to strengthen the memorization of the English names of various items, so as to reflect and strengthen a foreign language atmosphere. The so-called "soft environment" is the conversation between teachers and students, between classmates, in and out of class often in English, so that students have a kind of self-pursuit, self-improvement, self-improvement interest and motivation to learn English.

### 3.2 Optimize teaching content and practice language "internalization"

In the practice of English teaching, it is necessary to optimize the teaching content, teaching and learning methods, and the teaching process of "memory-exercise-application", so that students have a strong desire for knowledge and a sense of success in the whole teaching activity. Successful English teaching is not only to see how much content is taught in a lesson, the most important thing is to see how much students practice, learn how much, and how much they can use in practice. This "learning" and "using" is internalization(Zhou, et al, 2020)[5]. To optimize the teaching content, we must understand the teaching material, activate the teaching material, make the content of the teaching material life, let students feel the book language and our life practice close, have a sense of affinity for the teaching content, and then produce a strong thirst for knowledge, strong desire for learning, change is absorbed into the initiative exploration, therefore, creative research teaching content, It is an effective way to improve the quality of English teaching effectively to make it easier to learn and remember, and to cultivate students' ability. To optimize the teaching means, we must make full use of and create the scene, whether it is language scene, phys-

ical scene, audio and video scene can stimulate students' interest in learning. Such as listening to the recording, watching the projection, role dialogue, etc., let the students feel the scene, and strive to unify the book language and practical use, so that the classroom teaching can be carried out easily and happily in a full range of multi-level activities. To optimize the teaching process, we must focus on improving students' ability of using language. It is necessary to make students' four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing develop comprehensively and be able to use them comprehensively. It is necessary to improve students' ability to use their brains, words and hands through intensive training, insist on reporting on duty every day, and carry out some colorful competition activities, such as reading, storytelling, singing, calligraphy, stick figure drawing, etc., which is to improve students' foreign language quality. An important measure to practice the "internalization" of foreign languages(Yao, et al, 2020)[4].

### 3.3 Optimize teaching activities and improve application ability

The ultimate goal of learning language is to use it. In the English teaching activities, we should avoid memorizing hard, and do everything possible to strengthen the training of language ability. In the training, we should strive to combine knowledge, fun and flexibility in one furnace, and pursue the best expression results.

## 4. Conclusion

English is a very practical subject. It is a practice process that includes listening, speaking, reading and writing exercises as well as the input and output of language information. All these must rely on the students' subjective initiative, stimulate their interest in learning, so that they form

a good learning motivation and teachers to create good objective conditions for it, to effectively achieve. Therefore, optimizing the structure of classroom teaching and training students' ability of using English are important keys to implement English quality education. Therefore. Students must be placed in the use of language activities to perceive, analyse, understand, practice, from simulated communication to real communication, in order to achieve a real grasp of English.

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